



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
441 G STREET, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20314-1000

CECW-P

JAN 14 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS

SUBJECT: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works Planning Program Modernization

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to implement actions to improve our performance in meeting the purposes of the Civil Works Planning Program. It requires all Major Subordinate Commands (MSC) and District Commanders to be more engaged in Planning study execution and strengthening of our planner capabilities. As part of this effort, request all Divisions brief the DCW and myself annually on your respective Planning Program.
2. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers faces a multitude of challenges in delivering sustainable solutions to the Nation's water resources requirements. The first step of investment decision making is achieved through a planning process that identifies water resources problems and opportunities, formulates and evaluates alternative response solutions and identifies trade-offs. The planning process is crucial to the Civil Works Program. It is a structured, rational approach to problem solving that assists decision makers in recommending appropriate investments that are in accordance with the Federal objectives, laws and regulations. A decision to recommend a project for authorization answers the non-Federal study partners request for Federal water resources design and construction assistance and also reflects the non-Federal interests commitment to share in project costs and meet the items of local cooperation. The Civil Works senior leadership has been meeting regularly with the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) to focus on how best to modernize the planning program in order to effectively address 21st Century water resources challenges; to improve project delivery and yield smarter outcomes; to enhance collaboration with Federal, State, local and non-governmental partners; and to strengthen accountability.
3. The Administration, Congress and the Nation evaluate the Corps and Civil Works Program on how well we carry out our Planning Program, specifically the feasibility study process to inform Federal decisions and respond to non-Federal sponsor requests to determine their eligibility for Federal participation in solving their water resources problems. We must therefore assess and challenge ourselves to constantly improve our planning performance. These improvements include updated planning guidance and policy that realizes regional integration goals and concepts (communities of practice, centers of expertise, regional business centers); streamlined/adaptable processes to improve effectiveness and efficiency and to facilitate and support the delivery of products to achieve authorized purposes; and enhanced technical capabilities.



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4. MSC Execution & Accountability: Delivering quality products requires us to make commitments and to honor those commitments. It requires leadership and a more rigorous day to day management of execution of the Planning Program and a more informed development of budgets for feasibility studies. It will continue to be the shared responsibility of the entire project delivery team to ensure that the project management plan (PMP) is used as a continuous management tool to guide planning studies. District leadership must assure that PMPs are up to date, reflect all necessary tasks to complete a technically sound, and policy and legally compliant decision document, and include a risk based project schedule that is aggressive yet reasonable, accurate and coordinated through the vertical team. We should not be making commitments that cannot be kept because they were not carefully conceived nor properly staffed. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, we will be monitoring effectiveness through the monthly HQUSACE Program Review Board (PRB) and the quarterly Directorate Management Review (DMR), using existing P2 milestones (Enclosure 1). These milestones were discussed at the November 2010 HQUSACE PRB and are now beginning reported at each HQUSACE PRB.
5. Identification of Pre-Authorization Studies in 2011: I ask that you review your current funded studies to identify through your Regional Integration Teams (RIT) ongoing feasibility studies that can be advanced with vertical team support to take advantage of authorization opportunities that might arise within 2011. These are studies where we can expect to conduct a Civil Works Review Board (CWRB) and complete State and Agency (S&A) review to allow for the completion of a Chief's Report in calendar year 2011. Identification of these studies that are close to the finish line will assist us in managing resources to conduct associated Washington level review activities.
6. Strengthen Planner Capability: The most critical elements of our planning success are the readiness of our planners and our investment in planning human capital. We must focus on building strong planning teams and ensuring that they have adequate skills, resources, and capabilities to develop and deliver projects to meet the needs of the Nation. The Planning Community of Practice has in place a variety of initiatives related to strengthening planner capability and leadership, enhancing planning processes and tools, building strong collaborative relationships and the maintenance and functioning of National Planning Centers of Expertise. I ask that you stay abreast of the progress of these initiatives. Please ensure that all of these corporate responsibilities are integrated into the performance objectives of MSC Chiefs of Planning and Policy and district Chiefs of Planning. It is essential that planning leadership be accountable for training their planners to full qualifications in their respective disciplines using the training opportunities we are providing both locally and corporately. Towards that end, a National Pilot Program for Planner Certification (Enclosure 2) was initiated earlier this month.
7. National Planning Centers of Expertise: The Planning Centers of Expertise (PCXs) were established as national resources and their role has become increasingly important as we

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emphasize planning capability to deliver sound water resource solutions to the Nation. Currently, we are conducting a mission analysis of all USACE PCXs. We know the PCXs are vital to planning quality, execution and capability, but are under resourced. To date, our evaluation has primarily focused on the Inland Navigation and Deep Draft Navigation PCXs. A proposal to increase the production emphasis and staffing of these two PCXs has been presented to the National Management Board and will be presented in the near term during a Command Council meeting. An evaluation of the other four PCXs is ongoing. During this review, we will continue to evaluate appropriate emphasis on roles and responsibilities and alternative operational models for these Centers as well as explore alternative resourcing strategies. Your assistance is needed to assure that expert planners within your Command are available to support the missions of the PCXs (Enclosure 3).

8. MSC Planning Program Briefings: In order to assess individual MSC and overall Corps progress in modernizing the Civil Works Planning Program, request each of you to provide an annual briefing on your MSC's state of planning. The briefing will address the major focus areas of the Planning Program: study execution, planner training, capability and leadership, enhancing planning process and tools, the functioning of National Planning Centers of Expertise, and planners' role in authorization activities including preparation and review of quality WRDA fact sheets and development of implementation guidance and required legislative information. A set of draft template briefing slides is provided as Enclosure 4. A final template will be provided in March 2011. MSC Planning Program briefings will be implemented NLT 4<sup>th</sup> quarter Fiscal Year 2011. Also, Mr. Theodore A. Brown, Chief of Planning and Policy Division, HQUSACE, will be conducting Planning Program reviews with MSC Chiefs of Planning and Policy during the Fiscal Year to assess the quality and timeliness of our products and the effectiveness of our process improvements. These reviews should set the stage for the MSC Planning Program briefings.

9. The staff is in the preliminary stages of identifying pilot projects to inform a vision for future planning that shortens the timeframe for completion of a planning study, and incorporates the general concepts emerging from the revised Principles, Standards and Guidelines, as well as other Administration priorities. They are working with MSC Planning and Policy Chiefs to identify a subset of current studies that have been ongoing for greater than 10 years, in order to facilitate their completion. These efforts are intended to set the stage for a more aggressive approach to future budget decisions in the Investigations program beginning in Fiscal Year 2013. I look forward to engaging you in the development of this process in the coming


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months. The success of the Civil Works Program depends on MSC support and execution of the Planning Program. I appreciate your responsiveness and commitment to the development of a capable workforce and the timely and cost-effective delivery of quality projects.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Encls

*CDR,  
together we need  
to improve our  
planning capabilities -  
v/r,  
Bill*

*v/r*  
  
WILLIAM T. GRISOLI  
Major General, U.S. Army  
Deputy Commanding General  
for Civil and Emergency Operations

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